

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /057 W

-----020727 012138Z /66

R 011315Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5165

INFO AMCONSUL IBADAN

AMCONSUL KADUNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 13901

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PDEV, NI

SUBJECT: COMMENTS BY A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY MEMBER

REF: (A) LAGOS 13738, (B) LAGOS 13461

### 1. EMBASSY OFFICER MET WITH CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

(CA) MEMBER ALHAJI ABDULLAHI ADAMU IN JOS ON NOVEMBER 29  
ADAMU REPRESENTS THE KEFFI CONSTITUENCY OF PLATEAU STATE  
IN THE CA. HE IS A YOUNG, ARTICULATE COMPANY DIRECTOR  
WHO IS OBVIOUSLY AMBITIOUS POLITICALLY. IN A FRANK  
CONVERSATION, HE MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS  
ABOUT CA DEVELOPMENTS.

2. THREE-WEEK DEBATE ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES: THE DEBATE  
HAD "GONE WELL." THE DISCUSSIONS HAD BEEN FRANK AND OPEN.  
THEY REFLECTED THE ISSUES THAT HAVE BEEN HISTORICALLY IMPORTANT IN  
NIGERIA AND WHICH MUST BE FACED IF THE CONSTITUTION IS TO  
SUCCEED. ADAMU SAID HE WAS PARTICULARLY GRATIFIED ON  
TWO POINTS. FIRST, THERE HAD BEEN A CONSIDERABLE EASING  
OF TENSION AMONG THE MEMBERS AFTER THE FIRST TWO WEEKS.  
THE SHARPNESS OF THE EARLY DEBATES HAD WORRIED ADAMU.  
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PEOPLE WERE NOW STILL MAKING THEIR POINTS BUT NOT SO  
AGGRESSIVELY. SECOND, CORRIDOR RELATIONSHIPS HAVE  
IMPROVED "DRAMATICALLY" AMONG THE MEMBERS OF DIFFERING  
POLITICAL BELIEFS. PEOPLE NOW MAKE OPPOSING SPEECHES  
AND HAVE A CUP OF COFFEE TOGETHER AFTERWARD. THAT IS A  
GOOD SIGN FOR THE FUTURE.

3. TIMING: ADAMU HAD INITIALLY AGREED WITH THE CONVENTIONAL WISDOM THAT THE CA WOULD WRAP UP ITS WORK IN SIX MONTHS RATHER THAN TAKE THE WHOLE YEAR BECAUSE THE MEMBERS WERE ANXIOUS TO GET ON WITH POLITICS. NOW HE IS NOT SO SURE. GIVEN THE LENGTH AND COMPLEXITY OF THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION AND THE RAMBLING PROCEDURE OF ALLOWING EVERYONE HIS SAY, IT MIGHT TAKE TEN TO TWELVE MONTHS.

4. THE CA AS THE CRADLE FOR THE NEW POLITICAL PARTIES: THE SITUATION ACCORDING TO ADAMU IS COMPLEX. THERE ARE IMPORTANT POLITICAL ELEMENTS BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CA. IN ADDITION, MANY MEMBERS OF THE CA ARE NOT PARTICULARLY POLITICAL. RATHER, THEY LOOK ON THE EXPERIENCE AS A HISTORY-MAKING EVENT WHICH THEY WANT TO BE A PART OF. BUT THEY DON'T INTEND TO CONTINUE. THERE ARE A LOT OF CORRIDOR CONVERSATIONS GOING ON. BUT TO A DEGREE THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT IS A CHANCE TO GET TO KNOW WHOM YOU AGREE WITH AND CAN WORK WITH. THE PARTIES WILL DEVELOP FROM COOPERATION ON THE PART OF LIKE-MINDED ELEMENTS WITHIN AND WITHOUT THE ASSEMBLY AND THAT IS A MORE COMPLICATED PROCESS.

5. THE NATIONAL UNION COUNCIL FIASCO (REF B): ADAMU CONFIRMED OUR EARLIER REPORT THAT THE NUC WAS THE ABORTIVE PRODUCT OF A MISREPRESENTED PETITION BY WAZIRI IBRAHIM RATHER THAN A CONSCIOUS POLITICAL ORGANIZATION. HE HAD SIGNED IT. TO UNDERSTAND WHY SO MANY MEMBERS HAD  
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SIGNED, ONE HAD TO BE AWARE OF THE BITTERNESS OF THE EARLY PART OF THE DEBATE ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES. PEOPLE WERE ANXIOUS TO STEP BACK FROM THAT KIND OF FEELING AND WOULD HAVE SIGNED ANYTHING. ADAMU WAS NOT CERTAIN ABOUT WAZIRI IBRAHIM'S REAL MOTIVATIONS BUT SAID THAT HE HAD LOST A LOT OF CREDIBILITY AMONG CA MEMBERS AS A RESULT OF THE INCIDENT.

6. WOULD CIVILIAN RULE SUCCEED? ADAMU SAID HE WAS GUARDEDLY OPTIMISTIC. IT WAS A LONG ROAD TO OCTOBER 1979. WHAT TAKES PLACE BETWEEN NOW AND 1979 WILL DETERMINE WHETHER CIVILIAN RULE WORKS. BUT ONE MUST BE OPTIMISTIC.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
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